



CHILDCARE KEEPS PARENTS EARNING  
AND  
CHILDREN LEARNING!

## FOUNDATIONS

Policies are smarter, more efficient, better coordinated, and more successful when parents are at the table from the start.

Parent leaders have the experience and passion to help untangle complex problems.

Parents are policy partners: leverage them.



*I will  
be my  
children's  
advocate  
for life.*

- Denise, parent leader, mom of 3, member of the preschool development grant committee

## CRITICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Connect parents to child care before birth.
- 2 Documentation: Simplify, simplify, simplify.
- 3 Strengthen inclusion for children with special needs.
- 4 Prioritize access.
- 5 Create child care where it's needed most.
- 6 Value child care providers through increased pay and on-time pay.

California showed its commitment to parent engagement by including a Parent Committee as part of its federal Preschool Development Grant. The 10-person committee, made up of parents from across the state, included Black, Latina, Asian, and LGBTQ mothers with a wide range of experiences with the early care and learning system, including parents of children with special needs, foster parents, parents with experience on the subsidized child care waitlist, and more. This report gives an overview of their feedback and critical policy recommendations.

The Parent Committee informed California's State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction's stakeholder group, and provided feedback on topics such as the Preschool Development Grant needs assessment as part of its strategic plan; California's new child-care consumer education website [mychildcareplan.org](https://mychildcareplan.org); attendance records; preschool suspensions and expulsions; and more.



## 1 CONNECT PARENTS TO CHILD CARE BEFORE BIRTH

During prenatal appointments, families should be informed of child care services and resources and be able to sign up for child care assistance while pregnant, or make an appointment with a child care specialist to start developing a child care plan.

Post-partum, families should be connected to WIC and other social services they might be eligible for that could help build the foundation of family health and stability.

*All the numbers I was given were not up to date... or there was no availability where I called.... [all] leading to my daughter's fifth (and hopefully last) transition for child care.*



- Edith, parent leader, mom of 1, member of the preschool development grant committee

*I'm thankful for the child care service that I was able to get for my kids, but... I wish I had the resources years before - it would have definitely helped me out in the long run.*

- Iesha, parent leader, mom of 6, member of the preschool development grant committee

## 2 DOCUMENTATION: SIMPLIFY

There should be a single online documentation hub that any social service provider can access where you can upload your birth certificates, immunization documents, and other required forms.

Create one centralized list to wait for care.

Create a step-by-step guide to file a complaint with licensing for all programs, including state preschool.

Implement a seamless system where families do not fall through the cracks because of funding streams, ages of children, settings chosen, etc.



Iesha's children

## 3 STRENGTHEN INCLUSION FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

*This teacher I will never forget recommended community resources.... It's because of her desire to truly help me and Jordan succeed, that Jordan entered a full-inclusion preschool and thrived.*

- Henrietta, parent leader, mom of 2, member of the preschool development grant committee

Regional centers should connect families to child care services and resources.

State preschool should have full inclusion.

More resources for services for children with special needs should be offered.

Remember: behavior challenges do not define a child. Care providers should have mandatory training on supporting children with challenging behavior.

Parent-to-parent IEP support, mentorship, and navigation should be provided.



## 4 PRIORITIZE ACCESS

Families experiencing domestic violence, homelessness, or active military members should have priority to access child care assistance.

While families are waiting, provide other resources they could benefit from while waiting, for example: WIC, SNAP, CalWORKs, Paid Family Leave, food pantries, health care, and more.

Equitable access should be achieved using targeted universalism: groups without the resources, information, or ability to access programs equally should be given first access to state programs.



*Our daughter started child care at 2 months old.... We were new foster parents at the time and had no idea where to start. Without those lists, I would have been lost.*

*- Leigha, parent leader, mom of 1, member of the preschool development grant committee*

## 5 CREATE CHILD CARE WHERE IT'S NEEDED MOST

Create more affordable child care, especially in child care deserts.

Create more child care on community college campuses.

Offer more non-traditional care.

*I worked as a nurse from 11-7 p.m. and at times 3-11 p.m. and there was no childcare for those hours, so I used to take my kids to work with me at the hospital.*

*- Iesha, parent leader, mom of 6, member of the preschool development grant committee*

## 6 VALUE CARE PROVIDERS WITH INCREASED PAY AND ON-TIME PAY

Simplify and fix provider payment practices to encourage more providers to serve families with child care subsidies

Increase pay for providers who serve infants and toddlers, children with special needs, offer potty training and diapers, and offer non-traditional hours of care.



*It feels good and inspirational to be a involved in the conversations, to meet those who can see our recommendations through and the public officials who has the authority to not only hear what's needed but to take action that will lead to results that will benefit those that are most impacted.*

*- Larae, parent leader, mom of 5, member of the preschool development grant committee*

